

# Teen-Age Morals Worry Parents Around the World

By United Press International  
Concern about "that younger generation" is nothing new to American society. Parents the world over with few exceptions are worried — some more, some less — about how young people are thinking and acting on moral questions.

In such scattered places as London, Frankfurt and Singapore, to cite a few, elders are disturbed about the apparent tendency toward sexual freedom among adolescents. Delinquency is rising in many places but the gravest concern involves sex standards.

That is the consensus of United Press International correspondents living and working in countries around the globe. Their reports range from "a hot house of sex" in Britain to parental misgivings in Japan about declining reticence and modesty among teen-agers. In Europe, especially, sexual promiscuity among teen-agers is the major worry of adults.

In a country-by-country sampling, a varying pattern of teen behavior emerged, but there was one constant: change.

When it comes to discussing teen-age sexual morals in Britain, adult eyebrows go up and worry frowns appear. Britain today is in the midst of the most public debate in its history on sex, and much of it concerns the youngsters. "We are living today," said the mass circulation London Daily Mirror recently, "in the greatest hot house of sex the world has ever known. And we have a generation grown to sexual maturity earlier than any other."

Because of sexual looseness, illegitimacy is high. Roughly one birth in 16 last year was out of wedlock and largely among girls between 14 and 18.

"Youngsters are having a jolly tough time today," reported Mrs. Margaret Bramall, general secretary of the National Council for Unmarried Mothers. "There is too much stress by society on sex — in literature, films, advertisements and the like."

**Pagan Morality**  
The Sunday Observer, commenting on sexual freedom among teens, reported recently: "These (unmarried teenage mothers) girls are the inheritors of a new pagan morality, gleaned from the pop song, the ad man and Hollywood culture. They mature at an age when their mothers did not know where babies came from. They get drunk, make love in the backs of cars, front parlors, deserted classrooms. They are the product of a culture that holds out sex as the ultimate orgasmic glory."

Dating among boys and girls is common from the age of 14 and even these youngsters, said one newspaper, live in "a hothouse of sex." (The girls wiggle their bottoms, thrust up their young breasts and thrill at the reaction they produce in the "superior" male.)

A by-product of the sexual license is a steadily rising increase in venereal disease among the young.

**West Germany**  
Adult Germans are worried about their youngsters' morals, sexual indulgence in particular. Thus an official of the health ministry attributed the declining rate of illegitimacy not to improved morals but "to increasing sophistication, care taken during copulation, and the use of contraceptives and contraceptive devices."

German boys and girls start dating at 15 and 16 and sociologists say teen-age girls nowadays place no great premium on virginity.

"The average German girl

of today," one spokesman said, "will have at least three or four sexual experiences before marriage."

A recent poll by the newspaper Frankfurt Rundschau found that 85 per cent of teenagers and 75 per cent of the girls thought that sexual intercourse before marriage was permissible; many German teenagers reported they saw nothing wrong in unwed couples going holidaying together or on camping trips, and sleeping together on such outings.

**Italy**  
In Italy, the major worry about the present teen generation is in the area of morality. Sexual license always has been kept within bounds in the country by strong family ties and strict parental guidance. Dating by teen-agers is still mostly surreptitious and both parents and prospective grooms expect a bride to be a virgin — or if she is not, to marry the man in the case.

But in the last few years this moral code has begun to break down somewhat in a mass population shift to the cities. It still does not approach the problem in some other countries, however.

**France**  
French teen-agers present no great national problem.

In Catholic France a close parental eye is kept on young girls and dating in the early teens is frowned on. In the country boys and girls "go out" with parental consent. But in the cities, where parental policing is harder, dating is not uncommon among 15 and 16-year olds. But even among city teens, sexual promiscuity is not common. The attitude generally is that of the Catholic church.

A spokesman for the corrective education section of the National Justice Ministry told UPI sexual looseness was not a problem in France.

Of course, there are exceptions to the general rule. Most recently all France was shocked by the disclosure of a "sex orgy" club north of Paris which involved arrests of 100 Paris university students, and stories of "sex lessons" given by and for youths of both sexes.

**Sweden**  
Morally, the Swedes do not feel they have a teen-age problem. A much more broad-minded attitude toward sex than in most Western countries is one reason. Dating

**Four Appear in Circuit Court**  
Melvin Edwin Snodgrass, 25, of 803 North Main st., Ashland, had imposition of sentence suspended for four years in circuit court this week for burglary not in a dwelling.

He was directed to make restitution. He had pleaded guilty earlier to entering the Jeddloh Brothers Sweet mill Gold Hill, on March 16. Imposition of sentence was suspended for five years on Warren James, 35, of 86 Vishtl Way, for contributing to the delinquency of a minor. He had pleaded guilty earlier to the charge.

Herbert William Prosser, 21, of 421 West Tenth st., appeared in circuit court on charges of burglary not in a dwelling and John Dubay, Medford lawyer, was appointed to represent him. Prosser is accused of entering Tom's Texaco at Eighth and Grape sts. on May 8.

John Robert Stevenson, 55, of 460 Siskiyou blvd., pleaded guilty to uttering and publishing a false check and was sentenced to 4½ years in the Oregon State penitentiary. He was charged with giving a false check to an Ashland service station.

generally starts at 14 and 15 and is accepted.

No educator in Sweden would be dismissed or even get into serious trouble if he advised one of his young students that permarital relations are not necessarily wrong. One teacher told UPI that if he told a 15-year-old girl it would be better for her to have sexual relations with her boy friend than repress herself, "somebody from the Child Welfare society might come to have a 'chat' with me about it, but there would be no trouble." Rather, he said, the circumstances of the advice given, and the reasons, would be examined — and quite possibly approved.

Sexual relations between teen-agers are not encouraged any more in Sweden than in any other country; on the other hand, they are not regarded as being of necessity immoral or evil, though perhaps ill-advised.

**Japan**  
The older generation in Japan probably realizes more than anyone else in the world that there has been a tremendous change in the younger generation. Reticence and modesty, formerly "the" standard for teen-agers, is fast disappearing.

Teen-agers today are known as "gendaikko," literally "modern children," and they enjoy life to the fullest. They frequent tea rooms, ice and roller skating rinks and Sunday amusement centers. There are some arrests for "illicit acts," usually involving girls.

Juvenile delinquency is on the rise and authorities say the indulgence in what they call "illicit acts" is increasing every year. They blame the rise in delinquency on American influence (movies and television primarily) and the lack of restraint of some magazines which specialize in sex.

**Hong Kong**  
Teen-age morality has declined in recent years in Hong Kong and the blame has been laid on the influx of American movies and music, coupled with booming dance hall and small hotel business.

According to an unofficial study, at least one third of the students at English language schools and colleges here have experienced premarital intimacy.

**Korea**  
Korean authorities impose strict restrictions on junior and senior high school students, banning them from tea rooms and movies. Military authorities have forbidden teen-agers to date.

But authorities, as well as parents, admit students of today are getting more violent. An example is the 1960 student uprising which toppled former President Syngman Rhee. Juvenile delinquency usually takes violent forms. Some sexual incidents are reported, but they are not as frequent as in other countries.

**Philippines**  
Authorities in the Philippines trace hooliganism to influences of movies and television programs dealing with sex and violence, broken homes, formation of teen-age gangs and other causes. Some teen-agers begin dating early and necking and petting does occur. But, in the main, youths cling to traditional attitudes favoring harmless dance, picnic and movie dates and chaperonage. Widespread membership in musical combos and singing groups is regarded as a wholesome substitute for teen gangs.

**Malaya and Singapore**  
Teen-age morals in Malaya and Singapore have been on the decline with delinquency increasing.

A university professor recently advised his freshman

class to stay away from brothels and he admits there is some venereal disease among his students.

According to one oldtimer: "The things present day youngsters do were never heard of in our days." Social workers attribute the downward moral trend to unemployment, low intelligence, educational equality, rapid social change, broken home, neglectful parents and a decline in religious influence.

**Mexico**  
Mexican young people begin dating in their early teens and pre-marital sex is regarded as about as common as in the United States, possibly more so. This is attributed in part to biological factors of earlier maturing in tropical regions.

Sociologists attribute rising delinquency and sex patterns to poverty, which sends minors into the streets to seek a livelihood, and to some extent to the influence of free-spending tourists who point up the contrast in living standards. Places like Acapulco and some border cities attract peasant youths for economic reasons and they are exposed to immoral influences. Mexican authorities say tourists from the United States influence moral standards by their personal deportment and by creating demand for prostitution and other forms of commercial vice.

**Brazil**  
Crime, rather than sex, is the biggest problem among Brazilian teen-agers, simply because many of them must steal in order to eat.

Poverty is rampant and it is virtually impossible for a teen-aged boy to find a job.

In contrast, girls of 13 and 14 can easily obtain employment as maids but being away from their homes they frequently fall astray. Hundreds of illegitimate pregnancies occur among these girls yearly, the exact number uncertain because of the many illicit abortions performed on teen girls and women in their early 20s.

Juudges and sociologists warn that the government must divert more resources to education and easing the economic plight of youth to meet the problem of juvenile delinquency and immorality.

**Argentina**  
Argentina is fortunate in having few problems with teen-age morals. Various factors contribute to this, including strict family discipline, religion, avid sports interest and strict control of public morality.

This is probably the most sports minded country in the world and athletics of all kinds provide a useful outlet for youthful energies.

Argentina is a heavily Catholic country and the church has a powerful influence on family life and teen culture. The church has led a successful fight against reopening of

brothels closed a generation ago and it imposes unofficial influence over allowable standards in plays, films, magazines.

**Ban Magazines**  
Volunteer inspectors with city credentials confiscate pornographic literature, even "girlie" magazines, off news-

stands in Buenos Aires and authorities deal harshly with prostitution.

Teen-agers seldom date before 16 because of stern parental control. Family life is strong in Argentina and there is no divorce law and few broken homes.

Argentine youth are not

subjected to barrages of suggestive advertising, radio and television programs. Risque films and publications are not permitted.

**Uruguay**  
Uruguay has a generation of teen-agers who are romping through life with zany and zestful devotion to rock

and roll, the twist and even night clubs. It is a healthy, enthusiastic generation bordering on the frivolous but not immoral.

Uruguay became a socialist state a century ago and while it is a lay state, with separation of church and state and the only country in South

America with a divorce law, it is a land of staid bourgeois.

The schools in this country are noted for the excellence of their moral training.

Teen-age delinquency is growing somewhat, but nowhere near the rate of many U. S. and European cities.



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